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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

(for the period from 22 June to 7 December 2004)

I. Introduction

1. The present report gives an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) during the last six months pursuant to the mandate contained in Security Council resolution 350 (1974) and extended in subsequent resolutions, most recently resolution 1550 (2004) of 29 June 2004.

II. Situation in the area and activities of the Force

2. During the period under review, the ceasefire in the Israel-Syria sector was maintained and the UNDOF area of operation remained quiet. UNDOF supervised the area of separation by means of fixed positions and patrols to ensure that military forces of either party were excluded from it. The Force also carried out fortnightly inspections of equipment and force levels in the areas of limitation. Liaison officers from the party concerned accompanied the inspection teams. As in the past, both sides denied inspection teams access to some of their positions and imposed some restrictions on the Force's freedom of movement. In addition, Israeli national Customs officials continued to operate at the Israel Defense Forces post at the UNDOF crossing gate between the Israeli-occupied Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

3. The Force continued to assist the International Committee of the Red Cross with facilities for mail and the passage of persons through the area of separation. During the last six months, UNDOF assisted in the crossing of 903 students and 456 pilgrims. Within the means available, medical treatment was provided to the local population on request.

4. In the area of operation, especially in the area of separation, mines continued to pose a threat to UNDOF personnel and local inhabitants. Owing to the age of the mines and their deteriorating explosives, this threat has increased. UNDOF also supported UNICEF in activities to promote mine awareness among the civilian population.

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5. The Force Commander and his staff maintained close contact with the military authorities of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic. Both sides generally cooperated with the Force in the execution of its tasks.

6. As at 26 November 2004, UNDOF comprised 1,039 troops from Austria (375), Canada (192), Japan (30), Poland (349), Nepal (2) and Slovakia (91). National Support Elements were employed by Canada (3) and Japan (15). In addition, 77 military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) assisted the Force in carrying out its tasks. A map showing the deployment of the Force is attached to the present report.

7. UNDOF troop strength has been established at 1,037 all ranks. The reporting period has seen additional demands placed on military personnel resources because of headquarters security and training requirements established by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in line with the system-wide improvements I have recommended. Accordingly, it is necessary to adjust the UNDOF authorized strength to accommodate 10 additional military contingent personnel.

III. Financial aspects

8. By its resolution 58/306 of 18 June 2004, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $40.9 million gross, equivalent to $3.4 million gross per month, for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005. Should the Council decide to extend the mandate of the Force beyond 31 December 2004, as recommended in paragraph 13 below, the cost of maintaining the Force will be limited to the amounts approved by the General Assembly.

9. As at 31 October 2004, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNDOF for the period from the inception of the Force to 31 October 2004 amounted to $19.9 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to $2,308 million.

IV. Implementation of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

10. The Security Council, while deciding in its resolution 1550 (2004) to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further period of six months, until 31 December 2004, also called upon the parties concerned to implement immediately resolution 338 (1973), and requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of the period, a report on the developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement that resolution. The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East and, in particular, the efforts undertaken at various levels to implement resolution 338 (1973) were dealt with in the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Middle East (A/59/431), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 58/22 and 58/23 of 3 December 2003.

V. Observations

11. The situation in the Israel-Syria sector has remained generally quiet. UNDOF, which was established in May 1974 to supervise the ceasefire called for by the Security Council and the agreement on disengagement between Syrian and Israeli

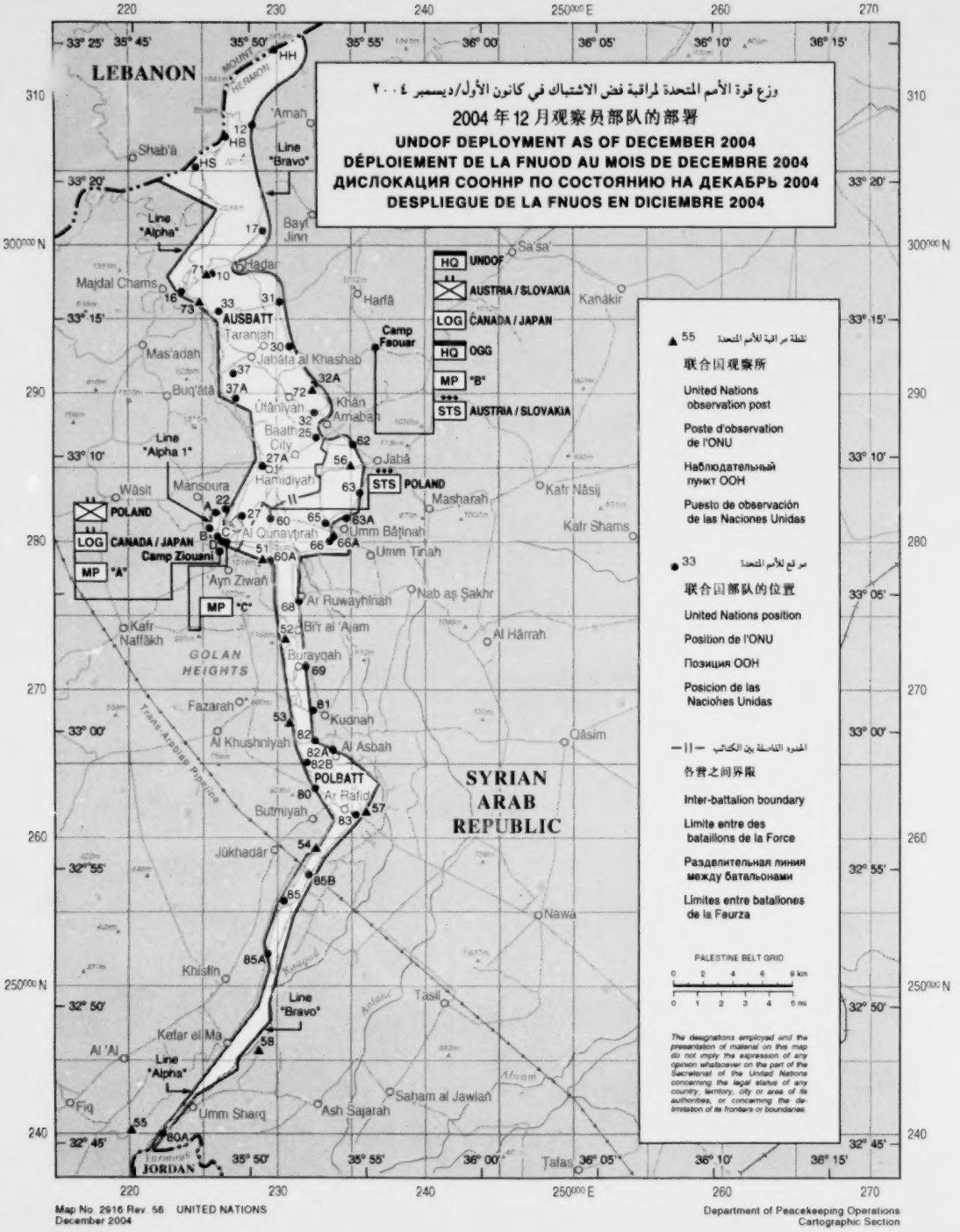
forces of 31 May 1974, has continued to perform its functions effectively, with the cooperation of the parties.

12. Nevertheless, the situation in the Middle East is very tense and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached. I hope that determined efforts will be made by all concerned to tackle the problem in all its aspects, with a view to arriving at a just and durable peace settlement, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973).

13. Under the prevailing circumstances, I consider the continued presence of UNDOF in the area to be essential. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Force for a further period of six months, until 30 June 2005. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has given its assent to the proposed extension. The Government of Israel has also expressed its agreement.

14. In making this recommendation, I must draw attention to the shortfall in the funding of the Force. At present, unpaid assessments amount to some $19.9 million. This sum represents money owed to the Member States that contribute the troops who make up the Force. I appeal to the Member States to pay their assessments promptly and in full and to clear all remaining arrears.

15. In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to Major General Bala Nanda Sharma and to the men and women serving with UNDOF. They have performed with efficiency and devotion to duty the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Governments contributing troops to UNDOF and to those that provide the UNTSO military observers assigned to the Force.


وزع قوة الأمم المتحدة لمراقبة فض الاشتباك في كانون الأول/ديسمبر ٢٠٠٤
2004年12月观察员部队的部署
UNDOF DEPLOYMENT AS OF DECEMBER 2004
DÉPLOIEMENT DE LA FNUOD AU MOIS DE DECEMBRE 2004
ДИСЛОКАЦИЯ СООННР ПО СОСТОЯНИЮ НА ДЕКАБРЬ 2004
DESPLIEGUE DE LA FNUOS EN DICIEMBRE 2004
LEBANON
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
JORDAN
GOLAN HEIGHTS
HQ UNDOF
AUSTRIA / SLOVAKIA
LOG CANADA / JAPAN
HQ OGG
MP "B"
STS AUSTRIA / SLOVAKIA
POLAND
LOG CANADA / JAPAN Camp Ziouani
MP "A"
MP "C"
AUSBATT
POLBATT
Camp Faouar
Line "Alpha"
Line "Alpha 1"
Line "Bravo"
United Nations observation post
Poste d'observation de l'ONU
Наблюдательный пункт ООН
Puesto de observación de las Naciones Unidas
United Nations position
Position de l'ONU
Позиция ООН
Posicion de las Naciohes Unidas
Inter-battalion boundary
Limite entre des bataillons de la Force
Разделительная линия между батальонами
Limites entre batallones de la Feurza
PALESTINE BELT GRID
The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.
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Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section